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THE GALLERY

THE ART SEASON IN BOSTON.

LOOKING back over the season of 1887-88, one feels cheered here in Boston with a distinct feeling of gain and progress among local art-workers and amateurs. The exhibitions of the Art Club, the Paint and

Clay Club, the water-colors and the various collections gathered at the St. Botolph Club, have made up an active and almost brilliant winter for us in our provincial corner. Perhaps nothing stands out in importance in the retrospect to match the exhibition of Mr. John L. Sargent's portraits, but that would have made a sensation in New York or Paris or London. A collection which had, for accessories merely, two great Salon successes—the "Spanish Dance" and the "Hall of Vases"—must have been the cynosure of all art interest wherever it might have been held. But here we had the pleasure of seeing this brilliant young painter at work on well-known men and women, leaders in fashionable sets in society, and the tests for earnestness and ability were easily applied. In many cases the subjects could be seen at the crowded and fashionable matinees at the Club, standing near their portraits, and it is to be recorded that nearly always neither the subject nor the portrait suffered in this juxtaposition. The artist is eminently gifted with that wit in painting which seizes the striking and the characteristic in his sitter and sums it up in a few happy strokes, emphasizing the point that tells. Perhaps he makes this faculty atone for too much slack treatment of detail; but, looking back, we can remember such portraits distinctly. Nobody who saw his odd sketch of Mr. Robert Louis Stevenson, for example, with its

eager glance and the quizzical smile just breaking on its thin lips, the long, thin, nervous fingers rolling a cigar and the still longer and thinner crossed legs, with one long foot tossing in air, but must feel that he knows just how this new "wizard of the north" can run on and on in a stream of flashing and fertile talk.

Another unique special exhibition was that of Mr. John Donohue's sculpture, for the centre of which the young artist rashly chose the heroic cast he made of John L. Sullivan, in anticipation of this modern Athenian be-

coming shortly the champion of two hemispheres. Somehow, Boston did not take the interest in "John L.'s" effigy that was expected, and the exhibition, for which a large public hall was hired, was a dismal failure as to proceeds, even before the bulky champion was beaten

himself in the "foot-race" with his lithe antagonist. This statue was impressive with the mass and reserved strength of the expectant attitude in which it was cleverly posed. But the statues of the "Young Sophocles" and the "Hunting Nymph" were superior, doubtless, to anything ever exhibited here in the way of contemporary sculpture, and ought to have saved the exhibition in

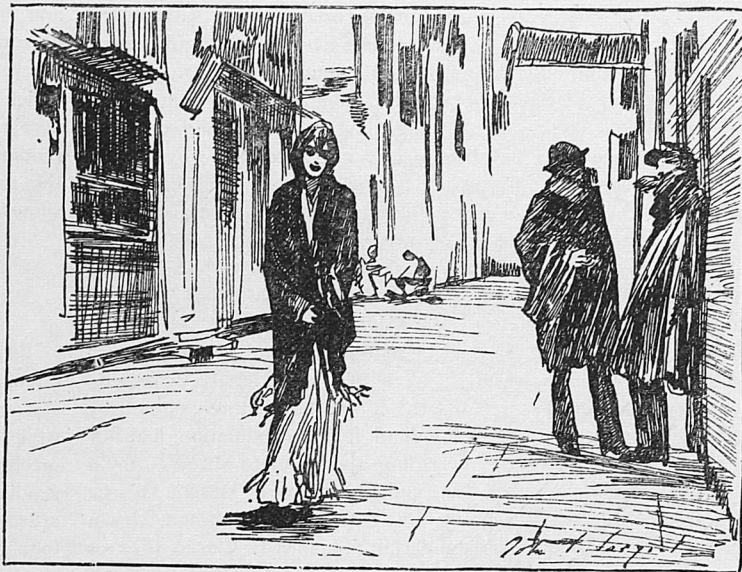
going amateurs, who, in spite of the certificates of artists and critics that many of the paintings were precious memorials of rare and true artistic insight and feeling, could not be persuaded to bid much more than safe prices for the frames enclosing them.

Perhaps the most remarkable and the most solid and indubitable evidence of development and progress in local art is furnished in the field of portrait work. At the latest exhibition in the St. Botolph Club gallery, two of the younger men and one young woman came out in great force—Mr. Dennis M. Bunker, Mr. A. Q. Collins and Miss Cole, daughter of Mr. J. Foxcroft Cole, the landscapist. Vinton, of established fame as portraitist, we have always with us, and he seems stronger and more genial with every performance. Mr. Collins follows hard after him, but with less grace, facility and freedom, though hardly less strength or solidity. But young Mr. Bunker is a man apart. Such distinction in choice of pose, in subtlety of flesh-tints and in style and air is rare indeed. He produces very slowly, with apparent difficulty, but what he does is well worth the pains. Either portrait of a lady of his in this last exhibition haunts one as with the presence of a real person, and yet they are the furthest possible from any familiarity, rather hold one off, as it were, in reserve, delicacy and dignity. Miss Cole, of whose phenomenal precocity I have once before spoken, is seen in the portrait of a little girl in a white frock. The childlike openness

of expression, the round, solid cheeks—not pink and conventional, but true flesh—and the delicious creamy white and soft texture of the frock are very knowingly, judiciously and delightfully done. Miss Cole has had some schooling in Paris, with the famous Mr. Carolus Duran.

But it is no longer necessary for American students to go to Paris, so far as teaching and teachers and good schools for drawing from the model are concerned. Besides the schools in New York there are two most excellent and completely equipped schools with life-classes in Boston—the Art Museum School of Drawing and Painting and the Cowles Art School. In the former, Professor Otto Grundmann, under whose direction the school began its work ten years ago or more, still presides, and probably has no superior as a

sympathetic instructor on either side of the water. Many of our leading artists have enjoyed his teaching on one side or the other. Mr. Frank Millet, who was under him at one time at Antwerp, I believe, was the intermediary through whom his services were secured. GRETA.



STUDY IN VENICE. PEN DRAWING BY MR. JOHN L. SARGENT FROM HIS PAINTING IN THE NATIONAL ACADEMY OF DESIGN.



A STREET IN VENICE. PEN DRAWING BY MR. JOHN L. SARGENT FROM HIS PICTURE.

"Tom" Robinson. Because these pictures had certain obvious defects or deficiencies in detail, both of drawing and finish, their noble spirit and large, sincere way of interpreting nature apparently touched not the hearts—most assuredly not the pockets—of the wealthy auction-